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and plans accompanying it should be submitted to the District Commander having jurisdiction over the area in which the bridge site is located.

[CGFR 67-46, 32 FR 17771, Dec. 12, 1967, as amended by CGD 75-046, 40 FR 24898, June 11, 1975; CGD 80-099, 46 FR 38354, July 27, 1981; CGD 82-102, 48 FR 54299, Dec. 2, 1982]

§ 115.60 Procedures for handling applications for bridge construction permits.

The following procedures will be observed in the handling of applications for permits to construct, modify, or replace bridges over navigable waters.

(a) *District Commander's review of application and plans.* When an application is received, the District Commander verifies the authority for construction of the bridge, reviews the application and plans for sufficiency, ascertains the views of local authorities and other interested parties, and ensures that the application complies with relevant environmental laws, regulations, and orders. If the application contains any defects that would prevent issuance of a permit (as for example, if the proposed bridge provided insufficient clearance), the applicant is notified that the permit cannot be granted and given reasons for this determination. The applicant may then request that the application be considered by the Commandant. If the applicant makes such a request, or if the application is not found defective, the District Commander notifies the public that it has been received and continues its processing. A copy of this notification will be sent to the state, interstate agency or the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) responsible for acting on requests for water quality certification for the project. If the state, interstate agency, or the EPA fails to issue or deny the water quality certification within 30 days after receiving the copy of this notification, the requirements for a water quality certification are waived. If the appropriate agency notifies the District Commander that the applicant has not filed a request for water quality certification, or requests additional time to review an application, additional time will be granted.

(b) *Public hearing.* (1) Public hearings will be held when there are substantial issues concerning the effect that the proposed bridge will have on the reasonable needs of navigation.

(2) Notice of the public hearing will be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER. Notice of the hearing is also mailed to State, county, and municipal authorities and all other known interested parties. It is also posted at the post office nearest the site and public places in the vicinity.

(3) Hearings are public and conducted in an informal manner. A designated Coast Guard official presides. The submission of written statements is invited and encouraged. Anyone desiring to do so may speak. Statements, written or oral, are not under oath, and cross-examination is not permitted. No fixed order has been established for the presentation of evidence or argument although proponents are generally heard first, followed by opponents with full opportunity afforded for rebuttals.

(c) *Report and recommendations.* After the close of the comment period and any public hearings, a detailed statement of findings, conclusions, and recommendations based on all available information (including Coast Guard records and experience) is prepared. The following factors may be discussed in this report:

(1) Comparison of proposed bridge with existing bridges over the waterway; attitude of local authorities; summary of objections raised by the public, and District Commander's comments or responses; probable effect on navigation, present and prospective.

(2) Description of the navigation on the waterway past the site of the proposed bridge, the number and type of vessels, the number of vessel trips, and the principal method of handling traffic, whether in single vessels or in tows.

(3) Whether the District Commander approves, or recommends approval of the plans. If they are found objectionable, the reasons for this finding will be stated. If there are objectionable features in the plans which may be corrected, the applicant is given an opportunity to revise them. If approval is given or recommended, all conditions

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to which the permit should be subject will be stated.

(d) *Action on permit application.* (1) The District Commander may issue the permit if authorized under § 1.01-60(b) of this chapter; otherwise, a report with the application shall be submitted to the Commandant for final action.

(2) When an application is approved, the issuing official signs the permit and transmits it to the applicant.

(3) When an application is not approved, the applicant is notified and provided with reasons for the disapproval, and suggestions for modifications that would justify reconsideration, if appropriate.

(4) If an application is disapproved by the District Commander, the applicant may appeal this decision to the Commandant under § 114.50 of this chapter. The Commandant's determination shall constitute final agency action.

(e) *Permit amendments.* Applications for amendments to permits will be processed in the same manner as permit applications. The District Commander may approve amendments to any permits which that official is authorized to issue under § 1.01-60(b) of this chapter. All other amendments must be approved by the Commandant.

(5 U.S.C. 559; 14 U.S.C. 633; 33 U.S.C. 401, 491, 499, and 525; 49 U.S.C. 1655(g), and 49 CFR 1.46(c) and (q))

[CGD 80-099, 46 FR 38354, July 27, 1981; 46 FR 42268, Aug. 20, 1981, as amended by CGD 82-006, 47 FR 36641, Aug. 23, 1982; CGD 82-074, 47 FR 51865, Nov. 18, 1982]

§ 115.70 Advance approval of bridges.

(a) The General Bridge Act of 1946 requires the approval of the location and plans of bridges prior to start of construction (33 U.S.C. 525). The Commandant has given his advance approval to the location and plans of bridges to be constructed across reaches of waterways navigable in law, but not actually navigated other than by logs, log rafts, rowboats, canoes and small motorboats. In such cases the clearances provided for high water stages will be considered adequate to meet the reasonable needs of navigation.

(b) The term "small motorboats" shall be interpreted in the light of the things and conditions with which it is

associated. The term means rowboats, canoes and other similar craft with outboard motors. It does not include sailing or cabin cruiser craft.

(14 U.S.C. 633; 33 U.S.C. 401, 491, and 525; 49 U.S.C. 1655(g); and 49 CFR 1.46(c))

[CGFR 67-46, 32 FR 17771, Dec. 12, 1967, as amended by CGD 81-076, 46 FR 54936, Nov. 5, 1981; USCG-1998-3799, 63 FR 35527, June 30, 1998]

PART 116—ALTERATION OF UNREASONABLY OBSTRUCTIVE BRIDGES

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AUTHORITY: 33 U.S.C. 401, 521; 49 U.S.C. 1655(g); 49 CFR 1.4, 1.46(c).

SOURCE: CGD 91-063, 60 FR 20902, Apr. 28, 1995]

§ 116.01 General.

(a) All bridges are obstructions to navigation and are tolerated only as long as they serve the needs of land transportation while allowing for the reasonable needs of navigation.

(b) This part describes the general procedures by which the U.S. Coast Guard determines a bridge to be an unreasonable obstruction to navigation and issues an Order to Alter under the authority of the following statutes, as appropriate: Section 18 of the Rivers and Harbors Appropriations Act of 1899, 33 U.S.C. 502; Section 4 of the Bridge Act of 1906, 33 U.S.C. 494; or the Truman-Hobbs Act of 1940, as amended, 33 U.S.C. 511-524.

(c) A bridge constructed across a navigable water of the United States shall not unreasonably obstruct the free navigation of the water over which it